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The University of Montana

NEWS RELEASE

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Feb. 21, 1995

CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST TO SPEAK AT UM

MISSOULA--

Civil rights activist and educator Diane Nash, one of the leaders of the nonviolent movement in the 1960s, will present two free public discussions at The University of Montana on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Nash will lead a women's studies/philosophy forum, "The Philosophy and Strategy Underlying the 1960s Civil Rights Movement," from 3:40 to 5 p.m. Tuesday in the Pope Room of UM's law school. At 7 p.m. she will give a public lecture on "The Role of Women in the Struggle for Liberation: Black Women in the 1960s, and Women Now and in the Future" in the Urey Lecture Hall. Nash's visit is sponsored by UM's Women's Studies Program and the African American Student Association in celebration of Black History Month, February, and Women's History Month, March.

Nash became involved with the civil rights movement at Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., in 1959. She was a key figure in the nonviolent sit-in movement of the 1960s that led to desegregation in racially segregated communities, according to "Notable Black American Women," a collection of biographies of African American women.

Nash was one of the founding members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in April 1960. Later, she was one of the "Rock Hill Four" who coined the "jail, no bail" strategy that civil rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr. later used.

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Nash coordinated the Freedom Ride, a protest against racial discrimination in public interstate travel and facilities that led to the Interstate Commerce Commission's ban of discrimination in interstate travel in 1961.

Nash worked as a field staff person, organizer, strategist, race relations staff person and workshop instructor for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference from 1961 to 1965. At the March on Washington rally in 1963, Nash was introduced as one of the outstanding women in the struggle for civil rights.

She was appointed by President John F. Kennedy to a national committee that promoted passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and she was instrumental in the Selma Right-To-Vote movement that resulted in the Voting Rights Act. In 1965, Nash received the SCLC's highest award for her work in the civil rights movement.

Nash has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show, the Today Show and the award-winning PBS documentary "Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years--1954 to 1965." Her work is discussed in more than 30 books, three hour-long television documentaries and numerous magazine and newspaper articles.

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NashLect.rl